
FISCAL UPDATE Article

Fiscal Services Division
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Des Moines, Iowa 50319

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WATER RESOURCES COORDINATING COUNCIL MEETING

September Meeting. The Water Resources Coordinating Council (WRCC) met on September 21, 2017, at the Polk County Extension Office in Altoona. Bill Northey, Secretary of Agriculture, called the meeting to order.

Miller Creek Watershed. Shane Wulf, Miller Creek Watershed Coordinator in Black Hawk County, provided an overview of the Miller Creek water quality improvement project. The project focus is to improve the water quality in two watersheds in south central Black Hawk County and northeast Tama County. The project covers over 42,000 acres that eventually drain into the Cedar River. The project began in 2014 with a Water Quality Initiative (WQI) Grant of \$499,000. The project was to be completed in 2016, but has been extended to 2019. In addition, the project was awarded a grant of \$500,000 from the WQI.

Point Source Project Update. Adam Schnieders, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), provided an update on the issuance of point source permits for wastewater plants and industrial facilities. There have been 151 facilities identified as needing permits, of which 105 have had permits issued. After the permit is issued, the facility submits a feasibility study to the DNR for review and approval. The feasibility study includes the installation of nutrient reduction technologies to reduce nitrogen and phosphorus. To date, the DNR has received 59 feasibility studies.

Nutrient Reduction Strategy. Laurie Nowatzke, Iowa State University Extension, provided an update on the 2017 Nutrient Reduction Strategy Annual Progress Report. A draft copy has been issued to stakeholders, and comments will be accepted until October 4, 2017. Highlights from the executive summary include:

- There has been \$420.0 million invested in FY 2017 to reduce nutrients. This includes expenditures for research, educational presentations, practice implementation, and water quality monitoring. The total includes \$243.0 million in payments from the federal Conservation Reserve Program.
- Information on the number of municipal wastewater plants and industrial facilities that have been issued permits.
- The Iowa Nutrient Research Center has funded over 30 projects with the focus of evaluating the performance of new technologies and conservation practices.
- Conservation practices in the past have focused on the reduction of phosphorus. This has included the construction of terraces and sediment control basins. To address the reduction of nitrogen, new practices are being implemented using cost-share funding from State and federal programs. This includes the installation of bioreactors and nitrate-treating wetlands.

Next Meeting. The next meeting will be held on December 12, 2017, at the Polk County Extension Office in Altoona.

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